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Chair: Mr. Yohanna (Vice-Chair) ..... (Nigeria)

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In the absence of Mr. Momen (Bangladesh), Mr. Yohanna (Nigeria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

Agenda item 20: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/66/8, A/66/281, A/66/282 and A/66/326)

1. **Mr. Clos** (Executive Director, UN-Habitat), introducing the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme on its twenty-third session, contained in document A/66/8; the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), contained in document A/66/281; the report of the Secretary-General on the third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III), contained in document A/66/282; and a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda, contained in document A/66/326, said that the convening of a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III) in 2016 had been among the most important issues discussed by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat at its twenty-third session. The report of the Secretary-General, in document A/66/282, made the case for holding the conference in the light of a number of new developments. He strongly hoped that the General Assembly would decide to convene Habitat III in 2016. He also urged Governments to include sustainable urban development and the role of cities and local authorities in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012.

2. UN-Habitat had been carrying out a process of organizational reform since February 2011, with the assistance of the Department of Management, with a view to enhancing efficiency, productivity, transparency and accountability. Productivity and efficiency would be improved through the use of flex teams to deliver clearly defined results; and transparency and accountability would be achieved through the adoption of a project-based approach to all substantive work. Organizational reform had reached an advanced stage and the intention was to roll out the new organizational structure and methods of work in January 2012.

3. During the reporting period, UN-Habitat had supported 33 countries in implementing slum upgrading and slum prevention policies. In the area of climate change, it had published its *Global Report on Human Settlements 2011 — Cities and Climate Change*, in April 2011, which identified innovative mitigation and adaptation measures that were supportive of sustainable urban development. In addition, UN-Habitat supported capacity-building for urban leadership in mainstreaming climate change issues into urban development in a number of countries. It was also continuing its activities in the area of post-disaster and post-conflict reconstruction.

4. **Mr. Laguna** (Mexico) asked for additional information about the difficulties and challenges involved in the planning of the work of UN-Habitat.

5. **Mr. Clos** (Executive Director, UN-Habitat) replied that planning the work involved taking account of a complex system of different inputs, including requests for help addressed to the Programme, strategic frameworks established by the General Assembly, the requirements of various different committees and the expectations of urban stakeholders, including donors. The thrust of the current process of organizational reform was to achieve a better alignment between the strategic plan, the budget and the organizational aspects of the administration of the Programme, in order to diminish the number of circuits and reporting lines. For example, some studies indicated that the time spent by the Programme's professionals on writing reports was over 25 per cent, which was too high and must be reduced. As UN-Habitat was expecting to be working with a reduced income in the near future, owing to the financial crisis, it needed to strive for increased productivity and efficiency, the more so as the process of urbanization was expected to continue to intensify.

6. **Mr. Suárez Salvia** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, emphasized the important role played by UN-Habitat in the overall pursuit of sustainable development. In particular, the Programme should continue identifying and sharing innovative urban development planning and management approaches and practices that were

responsive to the global challenge of climate change. The report of the Secretary-General presented a sufficient case for holding the Habitat III conference in 2016, in order to provide a forum for reviewing the Habitat Agenda in the light of new and emerging issues.

7. The Group of 77 and China was concerned about the continued increase in the number of slum dwellers, now approaching one billion, despite the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal target of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. Recalling that the Governing Council of UN-Habitat at its twenty-third session had adopted resolution 23/9 calling for the establishment of voluntary and realistic targets for slum improvement to be attained by 2020, with assistance from UN-Habitat, the Group requested that UN-Habitat and the developing countries be provided with the necessary financial support to that end.

8. The Group of 77 and China supported the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008-2013 and its financing operations in support of pro-poor housing and urban development, considering them to be important instruments to help advance the Habitat Agenda. It also endorsed the Executive Director's call to Governments to include sustainable urban development in the outcome of the forthcoming Rio+20 Conference.

9. **Mr. Khan** (Indonesia) speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN commended the strengthening of the existing institutional framework for human settlements development in order to deal with emerging challenges. While the ASEAN countries had shown resilience during the current global economic and financial crisis, many people in the largest cities continued to live in slum conditions. Indeed, it was ironic that the issue of housing should be one of the key elements defining the crisis: for developing nations with growing populations, there was a need to reduce the numbers of slum-dwellers by building decent and affordable housing units, but for some developed nations, the opposite was true: the excess building of residential units had been one of the determining factors creating the crisis.

10. The political commitment to a sustained global economic recovery must include policies of benefit to the poorest and marginalized sectors of society. That would entail recognizing the limited access of poor people in developing countries to affordable, decent housing, and ensuring that financial systems and regulatory frameworks reflected the housing needs of low-income groups. It would also entail ensuring their increased access to land and credit, and their protection from arbitrary eviction. UN-Habitat was to be applauded for establishing innovative pro-poor housing and financing instruments, including in particular the Experimental Reimbursable Seeding Operation (ERSO). Technical assistance and capacity-building were also important, and that was an area in which UN-Habitat had a comparative advantage in assisting municipalities and local authorities to develop better urban governance, urban planning and institution-building.

11. ASEAN was heartened that the implementation of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan had produced a results framework that had improved the strategic focus and programme planning process of UN-Habitat. In the ASEAN countries, the UN-Habitat offices had done a remarkable job over the years in involving public and private stakeholders in decision-making and implementation of programmes for affordable housing projects to alleviate urban blight. The ASEAN countries had established an environmentally sustainable cities award in order to increase awareness of the importance of living in an environmentally sustainable way.

12. Many challenges remained. The recent flooding which had severely impacted many countries in South-East Asia pointed to the need for the issue of urbanization to be linked with the problems posed by climate change and rising sea levels. It was therefore crucially important for the urban development agenda to be fully integrated into the sustainable development debate, and the Rio+20 Conference. ASEAN reaffirmed its support for the convening of Habitat III in 2016. In June 2010, the ASEAN ministers responsible for housing and urban development had adopted the Solo Declaration and implementation plan in which they had stressed the importance of strengthening poverty alleviation programmes in urban areas.

13. **Mr. Blair** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), welcomed the endeavours of UN-Habitat in the area of advocacy, particularly its

role in alerting the international community to the impact of rapid urbanization. A persistent challenge was that of determining how to deal with the growth of mega-cities and urban sprawl in a sustainable manner. The promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly with regard to land-use, according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and taking into account the economic and social needs of developing countries, was critical to the fulfilment of the Habitat Agenda.

14. Implementation of the internationally-agreed goals on adequate shelter for all, sustainable human settlements development and slum eradication would require a comprehensive and integrated approach supported by nationally owned policies which were directed towards achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all; access to safe water and sanitation; the provision of modern, affordable energy services; and waste collection and disposal. Capacity-building at the regional level should also be a priority, which was achievable in part through the sharing of experiences and common regional policy formulation and implementation within the context of the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

15. CARICOM commended UN-Habitat for the continued involvement of its human settlements experts in prevention, rehabilitation and reconstruction in disaster areas. It continued to support the medium-term strategic and institutional plan and ERSO. At the same time, CARICOM called upon development partners to provide UN-Habitat with the financial and technical support required to address the growing demands for assistance at both national and regional levels. The resources disbursed to the Programme were not proportionate to its many tasks, and the imbalance in core and non-core funding was a matter for concern. The continued unpredictability in the funding for the Programme created an imbalance between earmarked and non-earmarked contributions, as well as dependency on a small number of donors, and lessened the ability of the Programme to function in line with the priorities of Member States.

16. CARICOM fully supported the call for Habitat III to be convened in 2016. New and more diverse issues had emerged and familiar issues remained; the Conference would provide a framework for incorporating all of them into a more robust Habitat Agenda. CARICOM also hoped that the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference would adequately address sustainable human settlements for all.

17. **Mr. Zampetti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, reiterated the European Union's reservation as to the premises on which the Chair had based the speaking order for the current meeting.

18. Worldwide urban population growth combined with poorly managed urban growth presented a significant challenge to the international community, particularly as it affected the provision of adequate shelter for all. Despite international efforts, 828 million people had been living in slums in 2010. UN-Habitat was therefore faced with huge tasks, further compounded by the current difficult financial climate.

19. The European Union remained committed to the vision of "Cities without Slums", which should be achieved, without forced evictions, through improvements in the lives of slum dwellers and the sustainable development of human settlements, with the participation of all stakeholders. Social inclusion required the promotion of effective access to quality social services, including decent and affordable housing, which was important for the full enjoyment of basic human rights.

20. The European Union recognized UN-Habitat's achievements over the previous year and looked forward to continuing progress in the delivery of its mandate, particularly through the crafting of a realistic agenda for the next five years. It welcomed the ongoing review of the Programme, which was a major step towards making it more efficient, accountable and transparent, and UN-Habitat's commitment, under the Delivering as One initiative, to building synergies with other United Nations entities, while forming strong partnerships at both national and local levels. It expected UN-Habitat to make a significant contribution to the Rio+20 Conference, which should accelerate and broaden the worldwide transition towards a green economy; that transition could not be achieved without the strong involvement of cities.

21. **Mr. Farias** (Brazil) said that continuing economic hardship coupled with climate change

challenges had direct impacts on urban settlement quality and management. Governments, must respond rapidly to population growth, particularly in developing countries, by providing affordable, sustainable housing. Cities could contribute to climate change mitigation by promoting energy efficiency. In addition, a development-oriented urbanization process could help to eradicate poverty and promote more equitable societies.

22. In Latin America, although much had been done to address the urban challenge, nearly one third of the urban population remained inadequately housed. Slum upgrading was therefore crucial and needed to be combined with appropriate social, economic and environmental policies. In that context, UN-Habitat's mandate was very important to Brazil, which had been actively supporting the work of its Governing Council, in particular by presenting at its twenty-third session the draft resolution on the new Global Housing Strategy to the year 2025. The usefulness of the expertise of UN-Habitat made it essential for the international community to allocate further resources to the Programme's existing financial facilities, while special financing mechanisms and pro-poor market stabilization measures were needed to give the world's one billion slum dwellers greater access to housing ownership. In addition, the potentialities of the housing sector for the overall health of the economy should be harnessed through supportive policies and priority financing.

23. **Mr. Laguna** (Mexico) said that UN-Habitat served as source of guidance for policy formulation and decision-making; his delegation called on it to continue its work for improved urban structuring, stronger legislation, institutional and financial consolidation, training, technology transfer and the recovery of public space. Monitoring of the Habitat Agenda, in addition to offering useful information on progress under the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the relevant MDGs, would provide useful input for more effective actions and policies in line with the goals of UN-Habitat. Mexico looked forward to Habitat III, which would provide an opportunity to take stock of global progress since Habitat II, analyse the new challenges facing the international community in respect of urban development and explore innovative strategies and policies to address the rapid pace of urbanization worldwide.

24. **Mr. Gao** Ming (China) said that the serious human settlement challenges faced by developing countries made it essential to strengthen international cooperation in that field. His Government was currently promoting large-scale affordable housing construction while further enhancing its control of the real estate market; it had also made steady progress in urban infrastructure construction and made tangible improvements in the urban ecological environment. To provide everyone with a place to live, in the context of specific population and land space constraints, it had adopted an urban housing policy aimed at increasing the availability of affordable housing through purchase, rental and construction. China had also undertaken action to ensure the rational positioning of large, medium-sized and small cities, as well as their coordinated development, with particular attention to making them more energy-efficient and environment-friendly.

25. **Ms. Eckey** (Norway) said that, in contrast with the first wave of urbanization in the twentieth century, the poor formed the majority of new urban residents. However, urbanization was a factor in economic growth, given that 75 per cent of economic production in the world was city-based. High urban population density reduced the per capita ecological footprint by reducing energy needs and offered an opportunity to maximize sustainability. International development discourse and practice must adapt to that reality and shift from containing urbanization to preparing for it. Norway therefore welcomed the new priorities of UN-Habitat; they were reflected in its own new aid policies, shaped by a conviction that better urban planning could contribute to a greener economy by promoting resource efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating more productive and liveable cities.

26. One of the neglected problems that the international community would have to address over the next decades was the predominantly urban "youth bulge", given that 40 per cent of the one billion slum dwellers in the world were below the age of 18. Young people would be the main agents of change in the future and cities the most important arenas for change.

27. **Ms. Pan** (Singapore) said that, while the lives of 227 million slum dwellers had improved in the past decade, thanks in particular to UN-Habitat, the remaining 830 million slum dwellers around the world still had little or no access to basic public services and

no protection from the elements. Increased affluence due to globalization and rural exodus due to the lure of jobs in cities together with extreme weather events were causing urban property prices to skyrocket. To ensure adequate housing, Governments must address the poverty-environment nexus: habitat challenges were inherently sustainable development issues. A balance must therefore be found between competing policy aims; that required strong coordination both nationally and in partnerships with the relevant United Nations bodies.

28. Singapore, one of the most densely-populated countries in the world, had succeeded in overcoming the constraints of its size and geography. It had put in place urban and land-use planning policies to achieve integrated, liveable high-density urban solutions; it had taken proactive measures to create sustainable, green lifestyles for its citizens; and it understood the need to plan for both pre- and post-disaster responses to habitat needs, through early implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures. Moreover, in response to the current challenges of unprecedented urbanization worldwide, Singapore had held the first World Cities Summit in 2008. It would be hosting the third Summit in 2012.

29. **Mr. Sinha** (India) said that the extent to which urban development was integrated into broader socio-economic planning would increasingly determine the effectiveness of global efforts to eradicate poverty, promote inclusive growth and reduce environmental stress. In India, following a massive population shift from rural to urban areas, his Government had identified urbanization as a core issue in its next five-year plan (2012-2017), recognizing that innovative, sustainable solutions were needed for cities of the future. His delegation looked to the Rio+20 Conference to give further impetus to that approach.

30. India supported UN-Habitat's governance review and was itself working for governance reform in its local bodies to make them a catalyst for change. In 2007, it had launched a national policy to ensure affordable housing for all, in both rural and urban areas, which included a programme to provide basic services to the poor; it had also enacted legislation to promote energy efficiency and conservation. India valued its partnership with UN-Habitat and called on it to not to restrict itself to questions of urban habitat but also to give attention to habitat in rural areas. His delegation urged all entities to contribute to further capitalization to enable UN-Habitat to provide increased financial and seed capital support for slum upgrading and prevention. Enhanced efforts by the international community to provide financial and technical assistance remained crucial. India had shared housing technology with other developing countries within the framework of South-South cooperation.

31. **Ms. Phanarangsan** (Thailand) said that the work of UN-Habitat was increasingly important in order to meet the evolving needs of member countries, in particular by responding to new urban challenges and finding ways of strengthening the institutional framework for human settlements development. Its promotion of urban planning as a tool to protect infrastructure and promote resilience against disasters was actively supported by her country, which had recently experienced severe flooding; Thailand encouraged UN-Habitat to coordinate with other relevant convention secretariats in carrying out its activities. Thailand likewise supported efforts to redefine UN-Habitat's governance structure with a view to reducing duplication with other United Nations entities; it proposed that its Governing Council and the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) should meet in alternate years.

32. UN-Habitat should step up its efforts to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in its work. Thailand for its part stood ready to share its experience with others, particularly in the provision of low-cost housing to the poor. It was also important that city dwellers, communities and the private sector should be encouraged to participate in urban planning and to find collective solutions to their city's problems, for example through public-private partnerships. Big cities around the world could not but have an impact on the achievement of sustainable development, the three pillars of which should accordingly be included in the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference. As a member of the Governing Council for 2012-2015, Thailand looked forward to continuing to cooperate closely with UN-Habitat on all relevant issues.

33. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that rapid growth of urban slums and squatter settlements was a cardinal problem in many developing countries, particularly the least developed countries. He urged UN-Habitat to address urban poverty and inequalities by intensifying its work in the areas of slum upgrading and slum prevention, improving access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and promoting effective financing

mechanisms in support of slum improvement programmes. Failure to achieve those goals would risk turning the world into one massive slum. Sustainable urban development must be based on environmentally sound technologies, since while cities occupied only about 2 per cent of the world's land, they currently produced 70 per cent of its waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

34. Despite its limited resources, his Government had made extensive efforts to address the issue of rapid urbanization. It had put in place a detailed area plan for the city of Dhaka and was drawing up plans for other cities as well.

35. While UN-Habitat had made some progress in its resource mobilization efforts, its total resources were far from adequate to implement its mandate. The minimal proportion of core resources, unpredictability of funding and dependency on a small number of donors posed major obstacles to the effective functioning of the Programme. Bangladesh continued to support the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008-2013 and ERSO; it urged the international community to provide active financial and technological support, including capacity-building, to achieve the goals of the Habitat Agenda.

36. **Mr. Rohland** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that IOM supported the convening of the Habitat III conference in 2016. Welcoming the recognition in the report of the Secretary-General (A/66/282) of the issues of internal and transnational migration, he noted that urban development must be sustainable; while sustainable rural development was important, it was clear that urban centres would dominate the future of human settlement activity. Part of urban growth would stem from rural-urban migration, encouraged both by the benefits of economic and social density in cities and by the lack of opportunities in rural areas. In order to ensure that such migration was beneficial, a two-pronged response should be instituted: rural development should be promoted so that migration would be a matter of choice rather than of necessity, and urban centres should proactively plan for those naturally occurring flows.

37. It must also be acknowledged that migrants from the countryside faced discrimination. Frequently stigmatized as poor or backward, migrants from the countryside faced formal or informal barriers to full participation in urban life, making migration dangerous and leaving migrants vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Consequently, city governments must proactively ensure the availability of sustainable shelter and provide equal access to urban life, including to education, health care and decent work.

38. Climate change was a major concern both for the impact it might have on stimulating rural-urban migration flows and for the viability of urban centres themselves. Rural-urban migration could alleviate pressure on areas where environmental degradation exacerbated by climate change was occurring, thereby increasing their long-term resilience. It was thus counterproductive to obstruct such migration flows, as that would impoverish populations, put them at enhanced risk and worsen environmental degradation in source areas. However, some urban centres, especially those located in low-income areas, struggled in dealing with both population growth and the effects of climate change. International assistance might thus be required to build the capacities of city governments. IOM stood ready to provide relevant technical assistance for migration management.

39. Notwithstanding the negative consequences of urban growth and rural-urban migration, there could be clear benefits of both. Not only were cities economically and socially dense, and thus a crucible for economic and social development, but they could also provide a viable alternative for sustainable living. Migration to cities could add to those benefits by establishing, either directly or inadvertently, economic links with rural areas for internal trade and investment. Rural-urban migrants were often also able to transmit progressive social values leading to social empowerment. Such migration movements could thus be a positive factor in equitable and inclusive national development.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*) (A/66/87, A/66/297, A/66/298, A/66/298/Corr.1, A/66/337, A/66/388 and A/66/391)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/66/287, A/66/304 and A/C.2/66/2)

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*) (A/66/218 and A/66/278)

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*) (A/66/301)

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*) (A/66/291)

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*) (A/66/291)

(f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*) (A/66/291)

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session (*continued*) (A/66/25)

(h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*) (A/66/302)

(i) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*) (A/66/294)

(j) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*) (A/66/306)

40. **Mr. Hailu** (Ethiopia), said that his country was working to achieve balance and integration among the three pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and environmental sustainability. To that end, it had designed various policy tools which were people-centred and geared towards addressing the needs of the poor. Despite the global economic and financial crisis, Ethiopia had registered double-digit economic growth over the past seven years, and had been making significant strides through the successful implementation of its national plan on sustainable development and poverty eradication. Furthermore, with the participation of all stakeholders, including development partners, it had recently designed an ambitious growth and transformation plan, which set out to eradicate extreme poverty by doubling the size of the country's economy within the following five years.

41. In the area of climate change, Ethiopia had set up strict mechanisms through which all development projects must be assessed for their impact on the environment. Ethiopia had suffered the effects of climate change, in terms of cyclical droughts, erratic rainfall, desertification and rising temperatures. That situation required proactive government intervention, clear policy guidance and public awareness and preparedness. Ethiopia, like all developing countries, was a victim rather than a cause of climate change; it could not do much to arrest the impact of global climate change, but had to seek to mitigate the impacts.

42. While Ethiopia had made significant strides in economic and social development, the impact of climate change had often led to the reversal of hard-won gains in economic and social development. His Government had promulgated an environment policy in 1997 and had recently launched a green economy strategy which embraced two interrelated components: adaptation to climate change and mitigation of greenhouse gases. Ethiopia was aggressively undertaking programmes to conserve the country's soil, water and forest resources. It was also developing clean energy from hydropower, wind and geothermal sources for its own growth and even for the needs of its neighbours.

43. Ethiopia called upon all Governments to fully implement the Cancun Agreements and speed up climate change negotiations and urged its development partners to fulfil their commitments for climate change financing. Developing countries, especially those in Africa, needed to be supported financially and technologically.

44. **Ms. Bruell-Melchior** (Monaco) observed that the challenge facing the world was that of proving that investing in a people-centred and environmentally sustainable economy would bring with it opportunities for current and future generations, and for all partners, both public and private. The effects of climate change and of biodiversity loss, and the threat brought by food insecurity, meant that all three Rio conventions must be taken equally seriously.

45. Her delegation welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General in setting up a high-level group on sustainable energy for all. For its part, Monaco had adopted a plan intended to control the demand for energy, promote the development of renewable energy sources and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Subsidies were being provided to encourage the installation of solar heating systems.

46. The Rio+20 Conference must pay attention to the role played by the world's oceans, which covered 72 per cent of the Earth's surface and supported life. The objectives agreed on at the World Summit on Sustainable Development were likely to be achieved, if at all, only very slowly. A meeting of experts on that topic would be held in Monaco towards the end of the current month. His delegation also stressed the importance of international agreements, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to ensuring effective protection and preservation of rare and fragile ecosystems and marine habitat, including coral reefs.

47. **Mr. Valero Briceño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that since the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the developing countries had made significant progress, but the developed countries had still not fulfilled their responsibilities. Regrettably, those countries persisted in ignoring the underlying causes for the progressive deterioration of the environment, and obstinately clung to a worn-out capitalist model which encouraged the overexploitation of natural resources and kept the world on the brink of environmental collapse. The developed countries had failed to meet their commitments to transfer financial and technological resources to the countries of the South. They were maintaining unsustainable production and consumption patterns and were voraciously sucking capital and resources out of the developing countries.

48. Although the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production had been adopted by all countries at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the developed countries had distorted its objectives by promoting patterns of technological and financial neo-dependency. In the context of the review of the progress made towards achievement of the MDGs, the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference should not establish new objectives which might be a distraction from reaching those Goals.

49. The countries of the North had focused solely on only one of the pillars of sustainable development, economic growth. The concept of "green economy" was based only on that pillar, thereby distorting the principles and objectives that had been agreed on. To achieve a sustainable economy, it was necessary to adopt decisions that would transform the economic functioning of the global system, reverse the injustices and irrationalities of the market and make substantial changes in the international financial and commercial institutions. Only then would it be possible to establish a new development model based on equity, sovereign equality, shared interests, collaboration and solidarity among all States. In that regard, no unilateral measures or covert restrictions should be imposed against the goods and services of developing countries on grounds which were artificially linked to sustainable development. Such measures included protectionism, environmental compliance costs and conditions, and restrictions in the areas of trade, finance, official development assistance and other forms of international assistance.

50. Venezuela was constructing a development model whose centrepiece was the human being. His Government was pursuing a policy to eradicate poverty, discrimination and social exclusion, with the aim of achieving an inclusive and participatory society. Venezuela's natural resources served to strengthen social programmes at the national level and, at the regional level, allowed the country to pursue policies of integration and cooperation based on complementarity, not on the laws of the market. His Government was pursuing energy cooperation with other Latin American and Caribbean countries through the PetroCaribe initiative in order to promote economic and social development, finance renewable energy projects and increase oil reserves. The aim was not to replace one energy source by another: oil still had a leading place in power generation, and had a wide range of uses, but it needed to be supplemented by other, renewable, power sources.

51. **Ms. Haynes** (Trinidad and Tobago) said that climate change presented small island developing States such as her own with acute developmental challenges, compounded by the current global financial and economic instability. Rises in sea levels and sea surface temperatures together with ocean acidification had already begun to harm fisheries and agricultural productivity, undermine progress towards the MDGs and impede efforts to achieve sustainable development.

52. Although Trinidad and Tobago accounted for less than one per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, and was a net exporter of oil and natural gas, it was doing its part to stabilize carbon dioxide levels in the

atmosphere by reducing its dependency on fossil fuels and had taken measures nationally to meet the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was seeking, in particular, to diversify its energy sector through an optimal mix of renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean fuel sources. However, the magnitude of the challenges facing Trinidad and Tobago was such that it could not withstand the threat alone: international solidarity was needed to assist the most vulnerable countries and reverse the damage done to their ecosystems. Developing countries like her own were doing their part, but it was also imperative that developed countries honour their commitments under the Framework Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. Her delegation accordingly joined the call for a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, which was the only existing legally binding regime for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the safeguarding of the global environment.

53. **Mr. Sydykov** (Kyrgyzstan) said that sustainable development was key to eradicating poverty, combating climate change and ensuring food and energy security. Notwithstanding the progress to date towards sustainable development, humankind continued to suffer from poverty and inequality, while climate change and natural disasters threatened to set at nought decades of productive development. Those issues were of particular concern to Kyrgyzstan, as a developing landlocked country, 90 per cent of whose territory consisted of mountains. Its topography rendered it particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, thus posing a potential threat to regional security. He drew attention, in particular, to the thawing of glaciers, which constituted the primary source of fresh water in that region, and called on developed countries, which bore historical responsibility for climate change, to do more to reduce atmospheric emissions and provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries.

54. Access to modern energy supply was also crucial to sustainable development, as reaffirmed by the Secretary-General, who, in his report in document A/66/287, had highlighted the critical role of energy in attainment of the MDGs and reducing the pressure on natural resources. In that context Kyrgyzstan applauded the proclamation by the General Assembly of 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and welcomed the Secretary-General's identification, in the same report, of the proper management of water resources as an essential component of social and economic development.

55. Drawing attention to the vulnerable situation of populations in mountainous regions, he observed that their low food security was a potential cause of political instability and called on developed countries to shift their focus from forms of food aid which were prejudicial to development to a form of development assistance which helped developing countries become self-sufficient. Lastly, welcoming the recent World Mountain Conference held in Lucerne, Switzerland, on 11 and 12 October 2011, he expressed the hope that the outcome of that conference would inform preparations for the Rio+20 Conference and that the Conference would result in a political commitment to the development of mountain regions, in the face of contemporary threats and challenges.

56. **Mr. Daunivalu** (Fiji) said that current needs must be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The key was to strike a balance between social, economic and environmental objectives, in particular by encouraging the growth of green businesses and renewable technologies. His delegation called for the full implementation of Agenda 21 and the integration of environmental and social concerns into all development processes. It also strongly supported the call for a third Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the formal establishment of a United Nations category of such States so as to ensure targeted and operationally effective support programmes for them. Like other Pacific islands, Fiji was dependent on the ocean as the basis for sustainable development. Ocean issues must be addressed to bring about the paradigm shift needed to respect planetary boundaries, eradicate poverty and reduce inequality.

57. Faced with the threat of climate change, which was the ultimate indicator of unsustainable development, the world must reduce its carbon footprint, improve infrastructure and build capacity in the most vulnerable States. States with coral reef ecosystems, in particular, needed technology transfers from developing countries to help them with adaptation and mitigation. His delegation therefore urged countries to support the draft resolution on the protection of coral reefs to be considered by the Committee.

58. **Mr. Errázuriz** (Chile) said that multilateralism was the way towards finding solutions to global problems of sustainability in keeping with the Rio Principles, in particular Principle 7, which recognized States' common but differentiated responsibilities for environmental degradation. The international community must, as a matter of urgency, act to save the planet from the economic, financial and especially human consequences of pollution and the squandering of resources. It needed to renew its political commitment to the three pillars of sustainable development and, accordingly, to find the additional resources needed to mobilize efforts to advance the cause of sustainability. The greening of the economy was a means to that end and called for due attention to the differing levels of economic, social and environmental development in each country and strong, inclusive economic growth through the development of human resources, a bridging of the technological divide and greater market access for the products of developing countries. Sustainability also required better use of natural resources, greater energy efficiency and the development of renewable energies. Chile was committed to the goal of ensuring that, by 2020, renewable energy sources would account for 20 per cent of its energy consumption. He concluded with a call for greater efforts to reduce the risks of natural disasters, which mostly affected the most vulnerable countries, with the paramount aim of protecting life in all its forms.

59. **Mr. Asim** (Pakistan) said that sustainable development offered a means of reconciling two competing concerns: acceleration of the pace of productive economic expansion and deceleration of the pace of exploitation of the world's natural resources. Against the backdrop of the Doha Development Round deadlock and efforts to bury the Kyoto Protocol, action had to be taken as a matter of urgency to find a way forward. The forthcoming Rio+20 Conference offered a major opportunity to forge a collective response to the critical challenges faced by most developing countries.

60. Looking ahead, Pakistan proposed an agreement on a green policy space for the international adjustments required to achieve a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Such adjustments would include: an intellectual property regime reoriented towards the diffusion of technology and not confined to innovation; greater flexibility for developing countries in multilateral trading rules; development of a system-wide United Nations response to requests for international financial and technical support for green start-ups; and financial arrangements for the universal affordability of green technologies.

61. Agreement at the Rio+20 Conference also hinged on a viable reconfiguration of the institutional arrangements needed to achieve sustainable development. He stressed that the new setup must promote norms and ensure their implementation. Pakistan was also in favour of changes in the institutional design of UNEP to enable it to consolidate multilateral environmental agreements under the UNEP umbrella, engage more with civil society and the private sector, integrate environment and development as a core concern and secure additional and predictable funding.

62. Pakistan further proposed that the Rio+20 Conference should designate the United Nations Development Programme as lead agency for sustainable development efforts at the national level, in close collaboration with UNEP, and that the monitoring role of the Commission on Sustainable Development should be strengthened.

63. **Mr. Tachie-Manson** (Ghana) said that humanity's well-being and very survival hinged on the achievement of sustainable development. As a sub-Saharan country, Ghana was dependent on land and therefore, pursuant to the decisions adopted at the 10th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, looked to the Global Environmental Facility to increase its resource allocations to enable the Convention secretariat to take the necessary action, particularly in Africa. His delegation also expected the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference to propose measures to improve agricultural productivity and food security, promote research and development on sustainable land use and biotechnology for sustainable development, ensure access to secure and sustainable energy sources and support green industry. Ghana urged the international community to honour its commitments to Africa, including under Agenda 21, and to take the opportunity of the Rio+20 Conference to ensure the full operationalization of all the mechanisms already agreed upon, especially the proposed Green Climate Fund.

64. **Mr. Pfaffernoschke** (Germany) said that lack of access to water resources in sufficient quantity and

quality was a priority concern around the world, as it was often a major impediment to development. Water resource availability underpinned food and energy production as well as the provision of drinking water. At the same time, a rapidly growing world population was driving up the global demand for energy and food, putting additional pressure on water, energy and food resources, especially in developing countries and emerging economies. A water, energy and food security nexus perspective was therefore required to understand better the interlinkages and find synergies between the three sectors. Such a perspective would help to bring an intersectoral dimension to sectoral decisions and facilitate the identification of trade-offs between the sectors for better informed decision-making. His Government was accordingly organizing in Bonn from 16-18 November a conference that would focus on that nexus and was designed to provide significant input for the preparation of the Rio+20 Conference.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations A/C.2/66/SR.32

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session

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Second Committee

Summary record of the 32nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 3 November 2011, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Yohanna (Vice-Chair) ..... (Nigeria)

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Agenda item 26: Towards global partnerships

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11-57862 (E)

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In the absence of Mr. Momen (Bangladesh), Mr. Yohanna (Nigeria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 26: Towards global partnerships
(A/66/137, A/66/137/Corr.1, A/66/137/Add.1, A/66/320 and A/66/388)

1. **Mr. Kell** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector (A/66/320), said that the report took stock of relationships between the United Nations and the private sector, identified trends and made suggestions on how to improve engagement. Private sector partnerships by United Nations entities were an increasingly common and sophisticated mechanism for addressing priority challenges, particularly the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). All partnerships were voluntary and complemented the work of Governments. While the effectiveness of partnerships varied greatly, progress had been made both at the level of individual organizations, and system-wide, for example through the new UN-Business website, the revised Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Community, and the thriving UN Private Sector Focal Points community. Considerable progress had been made in engaging the private sector at large United Nations gatherings including the recent Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, at which the Private Sector Forum had complemented the efforts of Governments.

2. A number of recommendations were made in the report with a view to enhancing engagement between the United Nations and the private sector. There was a continued need to strengthen the enabling environment for partnerships across the system, through joint endeavours such as information-sharing and capacity-building; new partnership models should be explored, as United Nations entities moved from opportunistic towards strategic and, increasingly, transformational partnerships; capacity-building, especially at the country level, needed to be enhanced; the partner selection and engagement processes should be improved; more should be done in sharing best practices and lessons learnt; and evaluation and impact assessment should be improved, in order to achieve more coherent approaches.

3. **Mr. Fall** (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) entitled "United Nations corporate partnerships: the role and functioning of the Global Compact" (JIU/REP/2010/9), said that in 2009 the JIU had undertaken a review of the role and functioning of the Global Compact initiative, including the risks associated with the use of the United Nations brand by corporations. In the report, which covered the period up to April 2010, 16 recommendations were made with a view to an effective, transparent and accountable management of corporate partnerships.

4. There was no question that the Global Compact could be credited with significant achievements, in terms of the large number of activities, meetings and publications and the number of partnerships formed, in furthering the objective of promoting the ten agreed principles of responsible corporate citizenship. Under the dynamic leadership of its Executive Director, the GCO had proceeded with an bold expansion of its activities, which, however, went beyond the four areas of application of the ten principles. The JIU therefore recommended the establishment of a coherent and explicit mandate, as well as a long-term strategic framework, especially considering that the activities of the GCO were funded from extrabudgetary sources. In order to avoid overlapping of activities and resources, the GCO and the United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) should be regrouped under one umbrella, perhaps under the Deputy Secretary-General. By virtue of its special administrative and financial structure, the GCO enjoyed a hybrid status; the JIU urged the Secretary-General to ensure that the flexible application of rules and procedures was accompanied by appropriate transparency and accountability safeguards.

5. The funding base of the GCO was somewhat unstable because it was dependent on a small number of donor countries and a growing number of companies whose contributions had increased tenfold over five years. The JIU recommended that the GCO should put in place a robust funding strategy that addressed the need to increase and diversify contributions from Member States and to achieve more balanced public and private funding.

6. The current governance structure was organized around seven entities operating without a central decision-making process. The JIU recommended that Member States, as well as small and medium-sized companies and local networks, should be represented

on the Global Compact Board; that the advisory role of the Inter-Agency Team should be reinstated and consolidated; and that the Annual Local Network Forum should be enhanced. A plan of action should be devised to provide more effective guidance to local networks so that they could provide more substantial input.

7. While the Integrity Measures had enhanced the credibility of the Global Compact, the mechanism for submission of Communications on Progress (COP) did not allow monitoring or verification of the participants' actual application of the principles of the Initiative. The JIU therefore recommended that the selection process should be more rigorous and enhance the accountability of the GCO for accepting new participants in the Global Compact and implementing the Integrity Measures, particularly through better monitoring of COPs and a more proactive handling of complaints.

8. In view of the lack of an established mechanism for submitting reports that would make it possible to evaluate the activities of the GCO, the JIU recommended that the GCO should focus on developing global partnerships to promote the implementation of the ten principles and review them periodically, and should strengthen the effectiveness of the Global Compact and the principle of accountability by means of annual self-assessment reports and periodic independent evaluations.

9. There remained considerable room for improvement in the work of the GCO. The GCO should revisit its approach and refocus its priorities on a more coherent mandate, incorporating the ten principles into all the activities of businesses, in cooperation with civil society and other actors outside the business world, while involving the Organization and private and public sectors in forging new partnerships in support of United Nations goals and values.

10. **Mr. Kell** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact Office), introducing the note by the Secretary-General (A/66/137/Add.1) in response to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit in document JIU/REP.2010/9, said that the Secretary-General welcomed the relevant and robust recommendations contained in the JIU report. The note by the Secretary-General made it clear that many of the recommendations had already been implemented or had been in the process of being implemented at the time of the study. The JIU report had also anticipated a number of improvements that the Global Compact Board and the GCO had been in process of making during the period covered by the report or shortly thereafter. The JIU report highlighted a number of contributions that the Global Compact had made over the past ten years, including the significant expansion of its constituency and of its outreach activities to the private sector. It also recognized the Global Compact's key role in contributing to the Organization's increased engagement with the private sector over the years.

11. The GCO was just a small part of the Global Compact initiative, which was multi-stakeholder in composition; participants and stakeholders came from a wide variety of societal groups both locally and globally across 135 countries. The perceived risk associated with the involvement of both business and non-business participants in the Global Compact was carefully managed. The GCO worked within the United Nations system to improve the integrity and decrease the potential reputational risk of partnership activities. Although the overall structure was one of voluntary, decentralized and network-based governance of the Global Compact, with more than 100 country networks, those local networks had grown stronger and were supporting overall cooperation. On the particular issue of risk associated with private sector engagement, the GCO had spearheaded integrity measures including the Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Community, with a view to proactively managing integrity risks. Considerable progress had been made in benchmarking implementation surveys.

12. Volunteer initiatives depended on the goodwill of outside actors. For that goodwill to be scaled up and have a significant impact, incentives were required that were well designed and applicable to all. Efforts in that direction were progressing well, although there was still scope for improvement. Overall, the growth of country networks and their continued engagement with United Nations goals were indications that positive, complementary efforts did make a difference. The GCO had initiated hundreds, if not thousands, of projects geared mainly towards development, specifically towards the MDGs, leading to significant benefits to many countries.

13. **Mr. Diallo** (Senegal) asked how the JIU envisaged the establishment of a mechanism that would strengthen corporate accountability in the framework of partnerships. Although global partnerships depended mainly on volunteer initiatives, the obligation of

accountability was everywhere present. His concern, therefore, was how to ensure accountability through a mechanism of monitoring or oversight.

14. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) asked what the GCO was doing to develop indicators for Goal 8 of the MDGs, on a global partnership for development. Observing that the most important aspect of partnerships with the private sector was the transfer of technology, but that agreements for concessional assistance under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) applied only to Governments, as there was no framework of accountability for private sectors, he asked whether private sectors could also be included under such arrangements. Recalling that the Committee had discussed high-yield rice varieties and that mutually agreed terms and conditions always applied to them, he asked whether there were any special provisions under which high-yield varieties could be made available to developing countries to address the issue of food security.

15. **Mr. Kell** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact Office) said that the Global Compact had pioneered a unique system of mandatory disclosure: when participants joined the Initiative, they were obliged to disclose annually progress made against a framework of performance matrices, developed with numerous other partners. Participants who did not disclose that information were de-listed. The GCO had already had to de-list 2,000 corporate participants worldwide for failure to communicate progress made on an ongoing basis. However, many more participants were joining, especially from the developing world. The main way to promote accountability was to promote transparency. In the publications of the GCO every activity was exposed to public scrutiny. Transparency efforts were resource-intensive but worthwhile. A second important requirement was voluntary disclosure, which needed to be carried out on an ongoing basis.

16. The GCO was addressing the issue of the lack of indicators for Goal 8 of the MDGs. Many studies had been done on different types of partnerships, including a recent one on transformational partnerships. Various models had different advantages and disadvantages and the United Nations system was learning which modalities were most suitable.

17. With regard to technology transfers, the Global Compact promoted transfers at all levels. Many arrangements had been set up, for example through value chain initiatives. The country networks all brought together foreign and local companies. When objectives were shared, there was significant sharing of skills and knowledge as well. In the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the GCO would be working on food security issues.

18. **Mr. Fall** (Joint Inspection Unit) said that the representative of Senegal had aptly summed up the basic problem of the Global Compact and that the various lines of action he had outlined in his own statement coincided with the questions posed by Senegal. The initiatives launched by the GCO, the recommendations made by the JIU and others, the activities undertaken since April 2010, and the decisions taken in June 2010 had helped to show how apparently contradictory demands could be reconciled. The Global Compact was above all a volunteer undertaking, but there was a risk that corporations would join it primarily to take advantage of the United Nations brand for their own ends. It was for that reason that rigorous admission criteria needed to be applied, along with regular reporting requirements for corporate partners. Due attention must be paid to the question of Member States' representation on the Board. Lastly, it was the local networks, close to the ground, that were in a position to see whether a given corporation was not complying with conditions and principles, to report in that regard, and also to assist corporations better to discharge their obligations.

19. **Mr. Oussein** (Comoros) said that, since there was no mechanism for sanctions under the Global Compact, he wondered what could be done about the activities conducted by certain multinational corporations. Words were insufficient; there should be some means to take action against activities that had grave repercussions for populations.

20. **Mr. Zdorov** (Belarus) asked what measures were envisaged to address the issue of anti-social behaviour by youth in connection with the dangers presented by the Internet and to foster greater involvement by youth in social and economic life, with a view to the emergence of a green economy.

21. **Mr. Kell** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact Office) said that the Global Compact had no mandate to enforce compliance; rather it was a voluntary learning and action platform to advocate responsible business behaviour, as was being put into

practice by many participants worldwide who were starting on the path of incremental organizational change. There were mechanisms for peer review, best practices identification, and issue platforms on subjects such as good governance and environmental stewardship. The rewards of good performance over time were demonstrated by global market trends, including in parts of the financial world, where the sister initiative Principles for Responsible Investment was increasingly yielding a positive premium for companies that integrated environmental, social and governance issues into their strategy and operations. The emphasis was increasingly on corporations and civil society working together to address fundamental dilemmas and improve the enabling environment for the private sector to grow. There were many examples from country networks all over the world where the long-term desire for value creation by the corporate world, together with civil society and public policy makers, had actually led to significant and sustained changes in the enabling environment. However, the Global Compact was not a substitute for government regulation or local Government action. Its role was to reinforce positive trends and to complement Government action.

22. The GCO did not yet have a focus on youth movements and Internet trends but it was very much involved with the question of green growth and was encouraging young people worldwide to get involved; it had high hopes that, in the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, those considerations would spill over into the world of youth. Such efforts were under preparation at the venue of the Conference in Brazil.

23. **Mr. Fall** (Joint Inspection Unit) said that, in response to the question of the representative of the Comoros concerning sanctions, in the review of compliance with the ten principles under the Communications on Progress procedure, a range of sanctions could be envisaged for non-compliance, including the de-listing of an enterprise. Loss of affiliation with the Global Compact was taken seriously by corporations.

General discussion

24. **The Chair** announced that the order of speakers established for delegations speaking on behalf of groups of States at the current meeting was an interim measure that should not be regarded as setting a precedent.

25. **Mr. Kleib** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that solutions to the multiple challenges and interrelated crises facing the world naturally required strong global partnerships of the United Nations system, Governments and all relevant stakeholders. ASEAN was strengthening its global role as demonstrated by its theme for 2011, "ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations". It was striving to build the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015, as a single market and production base, and to promote high competitiveness and equitable economic development in the region. ASEAN recognized the private sector as an important motivating force in regional economic development and integration. ASEAN leaders had therefore established a business advisory council in 2003 to promote public-private partnership. The private sector had been playing a significant role in infrastructure development, connectivity, energy and trade facilitation, and many other areas. Under its new Charter, ASEAN was promoting the participation of people from all sectors of society in promoting the regional integration process.

26. ASEAN fully endorsed the concept of strengthening global partnerships, bringing together the public sector, civil society and the private sector in promoting sustainable development and addressing global challenges. However, private sector partnerships must accord fully with the development priorities of the countries concerned; such partnerships must be voluntary and complementary to, but not a substitute for, the commitments made by Governments to achieve internationally agreed development goals. Cooperation between the United Nations and the relevant sectors, including the private sector, must strictly adhere to the Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Community; special care had to be taken to maintain the integrity and impartiality of the United Nations. Likewise, private sector partnerships should reflect the core values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the principles of the Global Compact and a commitment to corporate responsibility and the highest standards of business ethics.

27. ASEAN attached great importance to the role and functioning of the Global Compact and to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a self-regulating mechanism. The ASEAN Confederation of Employers

had endorsed the principles and goals of the Global Compact in February 2002. ASEAN welcomed the Global Compact initiatives aimed at improving the enabling environment for creating new partnerships with the private sector. Recognizing the growing importance of environmental, social and governance issues for Asian business, the ASEAN CSR network had been launched in October 2010. In November 2011 a round table of ASEAN business leaders would take place. ASEAN welcomed the successful launching of a Private Sector Track at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and hoped that a precedent had been set.

28. ASEAN supported the Secretary General's recommendations on the need to strengthen the enabling environment for United Nations-business partnerships; to improve the partner selection and engagement process and capacity-building and training of United Nations staff; and to share best practices and lessons learned. It hoped that the spirit of public-private partnership would contribute to the success of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and that the drive for economic growth and business development would be pursued in ways that would be sustainable in the broader spectrum of economic, social and environmental development.

29. **Mr. Zampetti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; and, in addition, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, said that furthering the principles and goals of the Charter of the United Nations, meeting global challenges and reaching the Millennium Development Goals required working in partnership with the active participation of all relevant stakeholders: Governments, private sector and civil society. The United Nations was a unique partner for the global business community wishing to contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication. Private sector actors played an important role. Where they were not yet present, they should be encouraged to support the development agenda and uphold the international community's shared values and vision of progress.

30. The Global Compact had made significant progress over the past two years in involving the private sector in the work of the United Nations. Three examples were the introduction of a Private Sector Track at the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries; the holding of the annual Private Sector Forum to share best practices and lessons learned; and the positive role played by local networks in support of coordination and the application of global partnerships locally. Such efforts, and the replication of successful experiences, should continue. The United Nations needed to take a strategic approach to partnerships with the private sector, with greater stress on impact, transparency, coherence, accountability and sustainability alongside integrity measures and public disclosure, ensuring that best practices and lessons learned were shared in an effective and transparent manner.

31. **Mr. Wennubst** (Switzerland) said that global partnerships were widely acknowledged as an effective means of advancing United Nations principles and values, internationally agreed development goals, and international commitments. In ten years the Global Compact had become the most successful policy initiative for businesses that were committed to aligning their operations with core United Nations principles and values, as reflected in its growth to over 8,700 corporate participants and other stakeholders from over 130 countries, making it the world's largest voluntary corporate responsibility initiative.

32. The Global Compact should expand its activity in four areas. Firstly, it should involve the private sector in support of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Without strong engagement by the private sector, a green economy would not take off; corporate sustainable development should be part of the agenda of the Conference. Second, the Global Compact should continue taking the lead in new and emerging themes, such as the Women's Empowerment Principles and the Blueprint for Corporate Sustainability Leadership. Third, as its membership grew, the Global Compact must maintain integrity and accountability. The enhanced Integrity Measures should include the mandatory submission of Communications on Progress. The Global Compact could only become part of a true stakeholder dialogue if companies disclosed their implementation efforts. Fourth, although the Global Compact was the largest corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative, much needed to be done to provide outreach to the 70,000 internationally relevant international businesses. In order to achieve growth, the Initiative had to take root

in national contexts, especially rapidly growing emerging economies. The strengthening of local networks was therefore very important.

33. Switzerland called upon the GCO to further support private sector focal points and facilitate learning and coherence across the United Nations system, in order to foster cooperation with the private sector while maintaining the integrity and independence of the United Nations. Member States should acknowledge corporate sustainability as an important means for sustainable development. Continued support by Governments through voluntary contributions could assure the growth, innovation, effectiveness and independence of the Global Compact initiative and its Office.

34. **Mr. Farias** (Brazil) said that the United Nations had made considerable progress in promoting the role of the private sector in supporting State policies to achieve development goals and in helping to design and implement more effective, accountable and sustainable partnerships. Brazil's national experience indicated that an active and responsible private sector could play a major role in promoting a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development model. The private sector must be aware of its responsibilities and work with Governments in setting national priorities and implementing national development plans and strategies. In 2003, his Government had established a council of economic and social development in order to advise in the formulation of policies and proposals for structural reforms in the area of economic and social development. The council had been instrumental in promoting national debate on development-related issues such as establishment of public-private partnerships, tax reform, biofuel technology and education, and had drafted a national agenda for decent work. All the initiatives undertaken by the council required coordination and shared responsibilities between the Government and the private sector.

35. Brazil attributed great importance to the mandate of the Global Compact as a facilitator for engagement with the private sector and the promotion of the overall objectives of the United Nations in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and combating corruption. A strengthened Global Compact could also be a vocal advocate within the United Nations system on the need to engage the private sector and could help the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes fully exploit private sector capacities to contribute to the achievement of internationally agreed goals in areas such as education, health and the Decent Work Agenda.

36. **Mr. Diallo** (Senegal) said that the United Nations had taken important steps to involve the private sector more actively in its work. Examples included the global initiative against trafficking in persons, the annual Private Sector Forum, and the participation of high-ranking private sector representatives in discussions on sustainable development at the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries. Senegal believed that private sector participation in major conferences such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development should be enhanced. Despite that progress, there was a clear need to promote a more favourable environment for partnerships; the implementation of the recommendations made in the report of the JIU would unquestionably help make the partnerships with the private sector more effective, more transparent and more accountable.

37. His delegation noted the absence of a regulatory and institutional framework for the Global Compact and urged that a strong mandate and a strategic framework with specific short-, medium- and long-term goals should be defined in order to ensure the effectiveness, coherence and impact of the GCO. The establishment of a mechanism to strengthen accountability among corporations joining the Compact should also be explored. His delegation agreed that the GCO and UNOP should be merged into a single entity in order to avoid possible duplication.

38. His delegation also endorsed the need to further strengthen the periodic evaluations of the activities of the Global Compact so as to enable the various stakeholders, especially the United Nations and the Member States, to be effectively informed and to gauge progress in real terms. The Initiative had been subjected to little external scrutiny since its launching in 2000. An official reporting mechanism should therefore be established.

39. **Mr. Wang Qun** (People's Republic of China) said that the international community must cooperate in tackling global challenges that were complicating international development efforts. Strengthening global partnerships would help mobilize resources from all quarters in order to attain the MDGs on schedule.

40. To fully tap the potential of global partnerships, the United Nations should play a greater role in prompting enterprises to implement the Global Compact. The fulfilment of social responsibilities by enterprises brought win-win results for them and for society. Poverty eradication, economic growth, social equity, environmental protection and resource and energy conservation could not be achieved without the participation of enterprises. The Global Compact was a very important initiative for facilitating the establishment of partnership between the public and private sectors and served as a bridge between Governments and enterprises. The United Nations should leverage its resources and influence to provide guidance to Governments in promoting the active participation of enterprises in activities under the Global Compact, thus contributing to the timely achievement of the MDGs and sustainable development.

41. Intergovernmental development partnership remained the core of international development cooperation. The public-private partnership, as its supplement, should fully accord with the national development strategies of developing countries and should operate in areas where development cooperation and financial and technical assistance were most urgently needed. That approach was in the interest of the long-term and sustainable development of the partnership between the public and private sectors.

42. The independence and impartiality of the United Nations must be maintained. In establishing partnerships with the private sector, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes must safeguard the reputation of the United Nations. In selecting potential partners for cooperation, the United Nations should establish relevant screening criteria. It was also necessary to strengthen the assessment and monitoring of existing partnerships so as to detect problems in time and make improvements.

43. Fulfilling social responsibilities and achieving harmonious development had become a shared goal of the Government and business circles in China. Many enterprises in China had integrated social responsibilities into their business strategy, and 230 of them had joined the Global Compact and taken part in the relevant activities. Some large enterprises had publicized their reports on social responsibility in order to be open to monitoring by society. His Government would continue to intensify cooperation with all parties in joint efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on schedule.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

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Summary record of the 33rd meeting
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Chair: Mr. Donckel (Vice-Chair) ..... (Luxembourg)

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Agenda item 29: People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*)

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*)

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*)

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)

(f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session (*continued*)

(h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*)

(i) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*)

(j) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*)

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11-57882 (E)

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In the absence of Mr. Momen (Bangladesh), Mr. Donckel (Luxembourg), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 29: People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model (A/66/197)

1. **Mr. Hanif** (Acting Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)) said that, since the 2005 World Summit, a growing emphasis on the deep interlinkages between peace, development and human rights had permeated the work of the United Nations system. The agenda item under consideration would help the Second Committee to consider the relevant issues in an integrated manner and would thereby contribute to addressing the development challenges that countries were currently facing from a broader perspective. Acknowledging the leadership of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in launching the initiative, he said that the Second Committee special event organized on 18 October 2011 on "People's empowerment: a peace model" had highlighted core issues related to the relevant activities of the Organization. The Committee's deliberations would guide that work in coming years and relevant reports would be presented at subsequent sessions.

2. **Mr. Suarez Salvia** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that people's empowerment was essential to overcoming the challenges the world faced. Even where it was high, economic growth did not necessarily translate into development. State wealth, even in the richer countries, could not guarantee the social protection of the citizens. To achieve social and economic development, people's empowerment was indispensable at all stages of decision-making and norm-setting. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh had rightly identified a number of interlinked elements of peoples' empowerment and development, namely eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality, mitigating deprivation, creating jobs for all, integrating excluded groups, accelerating human development and combating terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations. The Group would submit a draft resolution on the subject.

3. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that, in many countries, high economic growth had failed to translate into people's empowerment. Correcting that situation required people's empowerment in decision-making and norm setting. Contrary to the principles of social justice, millions of people were unable to meet their basic needs and remained disempowered and voiceless. The systematic exclusion of selected groups and persons from employment opportunities was an impediment to socioeconomic stability. Eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality and promoting the active participation of all members of society in social, economic and political activities were essential for the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

4. The 2005 World Summit on Social Development and the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals had recognized that development, security and human rights were interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Political leaders should articulate a clear vision of inclusiveness and mobilize the collective will needed to support that vision through a coherent approach to economic and social policies based on participation and accountability.

5. **Mr. Lakhal** (Tunisia) said that citizens' political, social and economic empowerment was crucial to sustainable peace, which in turn constituted a multidimensional prerequisite for human development. Tunisia's first free and transparent elections had shown that healthy and rules-based democratic processes made everything work better. Yet in a world where billions were affected by extreme poverty, unemployment, hunger and disease and millions lived under foreign occupation and were deprived of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, peace could well remain a distant dream. Lasting peace required the establishment of social justice both nationally and internationally.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*) (A/66/87, A/66/297, A/66/298 and Corr.1, A/66/337, A/66/388, A/66/391)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/66/287, A/66/304, A/C.2/66/2)

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small

Island Developing States (*continued*) (A/66/218, A/66/278)

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*) (A/66/301)

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*) (A/66/291)

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa (*continued*) (A/66/291)

(f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*) (A/66/291)

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session (*continued*) (A/66/25)

(h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*) (A/66/302)

(i) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*) (A/66/294)

(j) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*) (A/66/306)

6. **Mr. Dabiré** (Burkina Faso) said that the challenges faced by Burkina Faso as a developing country, such as rising commodity prices, were compounded by the effects of climate change, which increasingly constituted a serious threat to development. Faced with alternating floods and drought, Burkina Faso welcomed the implementation of the Africa Adaptation Programme, supported by Japan, and had launched an accelerated growth and sustainable development strategy as a reference framework for all development-related action.

7. His delegation was concerned at the course that discussions relating to the new concept of green economy, to be taken up at Rio+20 were taking, and would welcome reassurance that the concept would contribute to the elimination of poverty.

8. In the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, he stressed that poverty reduction strategies should address the problem of land degradation. The synergies between the three Rio Conventions should be strengthened with a view to adopting an integrated approach to climate, biodiversity, desertification and sustainable development. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification should adopt a legal instrument in order to ensure sustainable land management in all countries, and that a global strategy should be launched to promote such management.

9. **Mr. Diallo** (Senegal) said that the international community should adopt a comprehensive, balanced, effective and consistent response to the current environmental problems and strengthen cooperation based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It should also support the continuation of negotiations in accordance with the Bali road map and promote the full implementation of the Cancún Agreements, particularly in relation to the Green Climate Fund, technology transfer and assistance for adaptation to climate change. The mechanisms for combating deforestation should be made operational, and a global agreement on climate change to succeed the Kyoto Protocol for the period after 2012 should be concluded, while consideration should be given to improving global governance in the area of climate-related issues in order to prevent minorities from blocking the negotiations.

10. Rio+20 offered an opportunity to accelerate transition to the green economy through specific practical solutions in the areas of climate change, loss of biodiversity, drought and land degradation. Such a transition entailed major changes to the current economic system and therefore presupposed a clear definition of the green economy and its implementation strategies, including for combating desertification and land degradation, costs, real advantages and possible risks, together with new economic and social principles, appropriate financing and a system for regulating the world economy in order to ensure consistency and sustainability. There were currently more international environmental governance bodies than necessary and the resulting inefficiency indicated the need for an overall structure to ensure coherent implementation of the relevant instruments.

11. **Mr. Empole** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) stressed the need for international solidarity in the face of climate change with a view to developing appropriate technology in the countries affected, funding adaptation and mitigation projects and building relevant capacities in the most vulnerable economies. The United Nations should coordinate all such international initiatives. Rio+20 would afford an

opportunity for the international economy to promote the green economy with a view to eradicating poverty and ensuring social progress for humanity as a whole; and to support sustainable development by strengthening the capacities of the organizations of the United Nations system, improving the coordination of their activities and creating a global organization for environmental protection.

12. In recent years, his Government had sought to ensure sustainable management of its forests in order to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, stem deforestation and reduce poverty. A post-conflict environmental assessment of the country published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had identified successful initiatives and strategic opportunities, and estimated that meeting the current challenges faced by the country required a doubling of the development assistance it received. Environmental projects would absorb US$ 200 million. The enhanced United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD+), to which his Government was already committed, was expected to generate the funding needed to address such problems as deforestation, species extinction, heavy metal pollution and land degradation due to mining and drought, and severe drinking water shortages. He called upon potential partners to assist his Government in reversing the country's environmental degradation.

13. **Mr. Zdorov** (Belarus) said that the complexity of developing new and renewable energy sources required national and international action within the framework of a global energy strategy. The creation of a United Nations global fund based on voluntary contributions by States, civil society organizations and the private sector could be a key element in a mechanism that, by enhancing the accessibility of environment-friendly energy technologies at lower cost, would contribute to their dissemination and universal use and to the development of a green economy. To function effectively, that mechanism should cooperate with other relevant initiatives, such as, inter alia, the International Renewable Energy Agency and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

14. It was important to promote the development of technologies and the supporting infrastructure in developing countries, including the least developed and middle-income countries, inter alia by increasing cooperation among technology transfer centres. An example was the UNIDO project for such a centre for the Eurasian Economic Community.

15. Belarus strove to contribute to resolving problems of sustainable development, including climate change, in a practical manner; it had initiated an amendment to Kyoto Protocol annex B which established a quantitative greenhouse gas emissions target for the country, and it urged the States parties to the Protocol to accelerate their internal procedures in order to support the relevant international efforts.

16. **Mr. Tatah** (Cameroon) said that, although the importance of mountains as biological and cultural diversity centres had been confirmed since the adoption of Agenda 21, the people of mountainous areas continued to suffer from the degradation of their ecosystems and, as a result, from vulnerability to natural risks and loss of biodiversity. Cameroon had developed projects and programmes aimed at the rational utilization of the resources of those ecosystems, which included sources of rivers essential to the population's well-being, and hoped that Rio+20 would stress the importance of a holistic approach, taking into consideration the economic, social and cultural needs of the population in mountainous zones. In view of the high costs of development projects in such areas, Cameroon invited Governments, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, the Global Environment Fund, the private sector and all other interested parties to provide appropriate support in accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/205.

17. **Archbishop Francis Chullikatt** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the international community must consider the environment's impact on the poor, on future generations and on humanity as a whole. It could not pass on to future generations a world depleted of its natural resources or increasingly vulnerable to the damaging effects of climate change. Responsible stewardship of the natural environment implied protecting nature from purely mercantile exploitation; full enjoyment of the land, water resources and clean air that all human beings needed in order to survive; and productive use of new possibilities, such as innovative farming techniques respectful of the environment and attentive to the needs of the most indigent. The economic and social costs of using up shared environmental resources should first be recognized by those responsible, not be borne by

countries with no liability for such costs or by future generations. To intervene only with economic incentives and deterrents or by educating society was not enough so long as there was a lack of respect for life in the human family. The current approach to environmental protection lacked a coherent plan for society, and humanity should overcome that serious flaw.

18. **Ms. Barth** (International Labour Organization) said that productive employment and decent work were keys to sustainable development and poverty reduction. Transition to a greener economy was necessary for sustainable development in general, and from a social and labour market perspective in particular. In order to achieve satisfactory results, Rio+20 must give high priority to new initiatives that accelerated poverty eradication and the transition to more sustainable production and consumption patterns. The Green Jobs Initiative, which was premised on the Decent Work Agenda, provided an important model for seizing the opportunities available in the developed and developing countries to shape a new investment strategy for sustainable development focused on the replacement of old, unsustainable technologies with new, cleaner ones. The transition to more sustainable production and consumption processes required close cooperation among Governments, organized workers and employers. The ILO's unique tripartite structure and its capacity to promote and facilitate social dialogue represented a particularly powerful mechanism that could catalyse the necessary changes. There were synergies between a greener economy and the need to create more and better jobs: it was not necessary to choose between the environment on the one hand and employment and growth on the other. Both would be achieved by green, clean and sustainable action and the creation of sustainable enterprises. That topic could be further discussed in preparing a successful outcome to Rio+20.

19. **Ms. Sommer** (World Food Programme (WFP)) stressed the importance of addressing disaster risk and food security in a comprehensive manner that would build resilience among the most vulnerable communities and countries. Disasters were a leading cause of hunger and affected all dimensions of food security, including economic and physical access to food, the availability and stability of supplies, and nutrition. When affected by disasters, food-insecure households often resorted to detrimental coping strategies, such as reducing food quality and consumption, cutting down on expenditures on health care and education, adopting environmentally harmful practices, selling productive assets and engaging in distress migration. Scaling up efforts to achieve food security and address the increasing risk of disasters was a critical priority for Governments. WFP supported Governments and the poorest and most food-insecure people through food assistance and disaster risk reduction efforts, including help in implementing advanced early warning and monitoring systems that tracked food security, nutrition, market indicators and natural hazards, and improving disaster preparedness, prevention and response.

20. **Ms. Muedin** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that migration was critical to any comprehensive strategy for sustainable development. While Agenda 21 had proposed measures with regard to environment-related migration, the challenges had since become more complex. For instance, adequate urban planning presupposed addressing rural-urban migration flows through, inter alia, sustainable settlements and inclusive social development. International assistance might be necessary in order to build capacities to that end.

21. Population movements caused by land degradation should be met with targeted responses with the support of the international community. Managing movement by instituting temporary or circular migration policies could alleviate the impact on fragile ecosystems and increase the long-term resilience of environments. Mainstreaming migration into disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies was critical to minimizing forced movement. Cooperation in that area could be facilitated by designating national and regional focal points for the Hyogo Framework for Action. In view of the strong evidence linking population mobility and sustainable development, the Rio+20 outcome should reflect an inclusive future for all populations, whether mobile or not.

22. **Mr. Bredel** (United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)) said that dealing with the chronic challenges faced by developing countries and countries in transition with regard to energy access and security required a much greater role for renewable energy in national energy strategies. To that end, support and commitment were required of all key stakeholders. UNIDO played a key role in

coordinating the relevant efforts of the United Nations system and worked closely with Member States to promote the development, transfer and deployment of innovative, resource-efficient and low-carbon technologies as part of a broader green industry initiative, with special emphasis on solar photovoltaics, solar water heating, wind turbines, small hydropower, methane from waste, and biomass applications for power and heat production. It also supported demonstration programmes, capacity-building, scaling up and replication of locally relevant renewable energy solutions, and the promotion of renewable energy markets. In coming years, UNIDO's support to Member States would focus on promoting private sector investment in market-based renewable energy projects. Public-private partnerships were crucial to that end.

23. **Mr. Jilani** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)) said that the specific contribution of IFRC to sustainable development focused on strengthening communities and supporting their ability to recover from recurrent or prolonged disasters and crises. Given the increased number of disasters, there was a need to enhance disaster preparedness and disaster response at the local and national levels and to address long-term and chronic issues, particularly in countries most vulnerable to disasters, climate change and environmental risks, such as small island developing States.

24. IFRC had developed a performance framework for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in order to facilitate relevant national strategies through the use of appropriate indicators. The results of three cost-benefit analyses conducted in Nepal, the Philippines and Sudan had shown that properly implemented community-based disaster risk reduction programmes were cost-effective. Accordingly, such programmes were currently being implemented by most national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. Moreover, IFRC was considering new funding instruments, such as a community safety and resilience fund and the allocation of at least 10 per cent of international disaster response funds to disaster risk reduction. Any future framework for sustainable development must include disaster and climate risk management. National legislation could clarify responsibilities, guide the deployment of adequate resources, address underlying vulnerability factors, and empower communities to play an active role in reducing their exposure to disaster risks. IFRC, together with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, was developing relevant model legislation.

25. **Ms. Persic** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that, although an important means of achieving the ultimate aim of sustainable development, namely human well-being and respect for the environment, the green economy was not enough. The multifaceted challenges and risks called for a comprehensive response to global social, economic and environmental issues, and for the creation of fair, equitable and inclusive green societies.

26. Greater support was needed to assist African efforts for peace, democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development and gender equality. Investing in education, especially for women and girls, was crucial to achieving sustainable development, poverty eradication, equity and inclusiveness. Science, technology and innovation policies were a key instrument for promoting green technologies and for encouraging capacity-building and scientific careers, in particular for youth and women. Cross-cutting science-based policies were needed to link the environmental, social and economic aspects of ocean governance and mitigate the rapid degradation of the sea. Safe drinking water for all was a high priority, and addressing the looming water crisis required strengthening education, training, capacity-building and awareness-raising efforts for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. Promoting biodiversity, for instance through the UNESCO biosphere reserves, was essential to poverty reduction and sustainable development. A holistic approach, taking scientific, educational, socio-cultural and ethical dimensions into account, was a key to addressing climate change challenges, including migration linked to climate change. Systematically integrating cultural specificities into the design, measurement and practice of development was imperative. Well-informed media formed an essential platform for debate and facilitated governance and accountability in favour of sustainable green societies and economies. There was a need for a more coherent institutional framework at the global, regional and national levels. Sustainable development and peace were intrinsically interconnected.

27. **Ms. Arditi Manzo** (Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) said that disaster prevention projects carried out by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in various countries included reinforcing structures against earthquakes and cyclones, constructing flood-safe emergency shelters and training village emergency teams and volunteers in the establishment of early warning systems. The Order also intervened in the aftermath of natural disasters through relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. The Order's disaster prevention projects included training children and youth in techniques designed to help keep their communities safe; organizing related drills for young persons; and promoting public awareness of disaster risks and access to information necessary for risk management at the local level.

28. **Mr. Bukuru** (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) stressed that land was the planet's life support and the resource base for food production. As Rio+20 approached, it was necessary to focus on the least developed countries in order to ensure nutrition for the earth's increasing population.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.2/66/SR.34

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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 10 November 2011, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Donckel (Vice-Chair) ..... (Luxembourg)

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11-58730 (E)

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(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session (*continued*)

(h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*)

(i) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*)

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Agenda item 20: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (*continued*)

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(a) Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence (*continued*)

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Agenda item 29: People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model (*continued*)

Agenda item 61: Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

In the absence of Mr. Momen (Bangladesh), Mr. Donckel (Luxembourg), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 16: Information and communications technologies for development (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.21)

Draft resolution on information and communications technologies for development (A/C.2/66/L.21)

1. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.21 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Agenda item 17: Macroeconomic policy questions (*continued*)

(a) International trade and development (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.39)

Draft resolution on international trade and development (A/C.2/66/L.39)

2. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.39 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(d) Commodities (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.34)

Draft resolution on commodities (A/C.2/66/L.34)

3. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.34 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Agenda item 19: Sustainable development (*continued*)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.30)

Draft resolution on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/C.2/66/L.30)

4. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, given the importance that those countries attached to the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, they had decided to submit procedural draft resolutions under agenda item 19 so as to allow more time to prepare for the Conference. The Group of 77 and China hoped that the subject-matter of the draft resolutions would be taken up in depth at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

5. Introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.30 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, she said that those countries hoped that all Member States would be represented at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development at the level of Heads of State or Government. The Group of 77 and China was very concerned about the lack of resources in the trust fund for the Conference and hoped that donors would make further contributions to the fund in order to ensure the participation of developing countries in the preparatory process and at the Conference.

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.26)

Draft resolution on the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/C.2/66/L.26)

6. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.26 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that small island developing States were particularly vulnerable to climate change, especially such phenomena as rising sea levels and extreme climate events. Although the challenges were not exclusive to those States, for some low-lying States the threat was existential. An urgent response was therefore needed. The international community must meet its commitments under the Mauritius Strategy and must ensure that the concerns of small island developing States were adequately reflected in the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.27)

Draft resolution on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/C.2/66/L.27)

7. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.27 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.28)

Draft resolution on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (A/C.2/66/L.28)

8. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.28 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.44)

Draft resolution on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (A/C.2/66/L.44)

9. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.44 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.29)

Draft resolution on the Convention on Biological Diversity (A/C.2/66/L.29)

10. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.29 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.45)

Draft resolution on the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-sixth session (A/C.2/66/L.45)

11. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.45 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(h) Harmony with Nature (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.42)

Draft resolution on Harmony with Nature (A/C.2/66/L.42)

12. **Mr. Archondo** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.42, said that Cuba had become a sponsor. The objective of the draft resolution was to promote debate, enhance ethical awareness and create the practical tools needed to help recover the balance of nature. Up until recently, human activities had been relatively benign, but the rapid changes that were taking place were resulting in such phenomena as climate change, damage to the land and coasts and to the marine habitat, higher extinction rates of species, and significant losses of tropical forests. The draft resolution sought to determine what changes were taking place and what the consequences would be for human civilization, as well as what could be done to avoid even greater damage. To that end, the Secretary-General was requested to convene an interactive dialogue between the United Nations and the scientific community, to coincide with the observance of International Mother Earth Day in 2012. The draft resolution aimed to promote an understanding that all inhabitants of the Earth lived in an interconnected world and shared a common destiny, so that every action affected the Earth and all humanity.

(i) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.33)

Draft resolution on sustainable mountain development (A/C.2/66/L.33)

13. **Mr. Muñoz** (Peru), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.33, said that Afghanistan, Honduras, Madagascar, the Philippines and Viet Nam had joined the list of sponsors. The draft resolution aimed to highlight the increasing awareness that mountains were fragile ecosystems of global importance. Mountains covered about one quarter of the Earth's surface and provided a livelihood for about 12 per cent of the world's population as well as essential goods and services to over half of humankind, yet many of the world's most impoverished people lived in mountain regions. There was therefore a need to ensure the environmental health of mountain areas within the existing international policy framework.

(j) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.31)

Draft resolution on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/C.2/66/L.31)

14. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.31 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Draft resolutions submitted under the chapeau of agenda item 19

Draft resolution on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/C.2/66/L.25)

15. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.25 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Draft resolution on developmental benefits of biodiversity (A/C.2/66/L.32)

16. **Ms. Miranda** (Peru), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.32, said that it was important for all States to be aware of the economic, social and environmental benefits offered by the Convention on Biological Diversity and to ensure proper management of those benefits in order to achieve sustainable development. The role of biodiversity in economic growth and development was becoming increasingly evident; in that regard, it was important to achieve an effective synergy between modern science and local and indigenous knowledge. Member States must ensure that biodiversity was incorporated into national policies and strategies in the context of a comprehensive approach to development, in order to promote the objectives of the Convention.

Draft resolution on international cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan (A/C.2/66/L.35)

17. **Ms. Aitimova** (Kazakhstan), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.35, said that Algeria, Armenia, Benin, India, Iraq, Latvia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Spain and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had joined the list of sponsors. Her delegation viewed the support by a large number of sponsors as recognition by the international community of Kazakhstan's historic contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In August 2011, Kazakhstan had commemorated the 20th anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site when, for the first time in world history, a major test site had been shut down. Kazakhstan had also voluntarily abandoned its nuclear-missile arsenal, at that time fourth in the world in terms of capability. Over a period of 40 years, some 468 nuclear tests had been conducted there, and much of the population of the region was still suffering from the negative consequences of nuclear radiation.

18. Over the past decade, her Government, along with the international community, had allocated at least US$ 4.5 billion to help rehabilitate the region; although much had been accomplished, the severity of the problems still required continuing international attention. There was a growing understanding that there was a need to shift the focus from recovery to long-term development, and that the challenges could best be addressed through a holistic, comprehensive approach and through a strong partnership between her Government, the United Nations and all development partners.

Draft resolution on the protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development (A/C.2/66/L.38)

19. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.38 on behalf of the Pacific States and the other sponsors, which had been joined by Israel, Monaco and the Philippines, said that coral reef ecosystems around the world were under threat; about one fifth of coral reefs had already been damaged, and 35 per cent were predicted to be lost over the next 20 to 40 years if no change occurred. Some 341 coral reef species were currently threatened, and it was predicted that through the combined impact of climate change, ocean acidification and other human impacts, 90 per cent would be threatened by 2030, if no protective measures were taken. Over 275 million people, mostly in developing countries and island nations, depended directly on coral reefs for their livelihoods; world fisheries supported 170 million jobs, and more than 1.5 billion people relied on marine resources for their protein intake. The vulnerability of the Pacific small island developing States to economic, social and environmental challenges and their lack of capacity to address them were major constraints to sustainable development. The draft resolution therefore urged States to identify coral reef management as an urgent sustainable development priority.

Draft resolution on agricultural technology for development (A/C.2/66/L.41)

20. **Ms. Davidovich** (Israel), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.41, said that it was widely acknowledged that agriculture lay at the heart of sustainable development. Strengthening agricultural sectors in the developing world was crucial to building resilient communities that would be better equipped to respond to the challenges posed by poverty, food insecurity and climate change. The draft resolution therefore called for the international community to collaborate and to make increased efforts in the development, dissemination and implementation of agricultural technology as well as in research and capacity-building.

Agenda item 20: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.36)

Draft resolution on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/C.2/66/L.36)

21. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.36 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Agenda item 21: Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)

(a) Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence (*continued*) (A/C.2/66.L.23)

Draft resolution on the role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence (A/C.2/66.L.23)

22. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.23 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(b) Science and technology for development (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.24)

Draft resolution on science and technology for development (A/C.2/66/L.24)

23. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.24 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

(c) Development cooperation with middle-income countries (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.18)

Draft resolution on development cooperation with middle-income countries (A/C.2/66/L.18)

24. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.18 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Draft resolution on promoting the efficiency, transparency and accountability of public administration by strengthening supreme audit institutions (A/C.2/66/L.16), *submitted under the chapeau of agenda item 21*

25. **Mr. Brandstatter** (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.16, said that Denmark, Greece, Honduras, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Monaco, Portugal, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine had joined the list of sponsors. The sponsors strongly believed that building strong institutions was a central challenge of development and that supreme audit institutions played a critical role as they helped promote sound financial management and thus accountable and transparent government.

Agenda item 25: Agriculture development and food security (*continued*)

Draft resolution on agriculture development and food security (A/C.2/66/L.17)

26. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.17 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Draft resolution on the International Year of Quinoa, 2013 (A/C.2/66/L.19)

27. **Mr. Archondo** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.19, said that Argentina, Honduras, Paraguay and Uruguay had joined the list of sponsors. The draft resolution took into account the adoption by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in July 2011 at its thirty-seventh session, of resolution 15/2011, in which it recognized the nutritional value of quinoa and called for the

proclamation of the year 2013 as the International Year of Quinoa. Quinoa, a traditional crop grown by indigenous peoples for some 7,000 years, had a high protein content: it was the only vegetable to provide all the essential amino-acids and, from that point of view, was superior to wheat, barley and soy and could be compared favourably with milk. It could therefore contribute to the food and nutritional security of current and future generations and to the eradication of poverty and malnutrition, especially in developing countries.

Draft resolution on the International Year of Family Farming 2014 (A/C.2/66/L.20)

28. **Mr. De Vega** (Philippines), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.20, said that Bangladesh, Brazil, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Niger, Peru, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Togo and Viet Nam had joined the list of sponsors. The draft resolution was based on resolution 16/2011 of the Conference of FAO, in which the Conference had called for the proclamation of 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming. Of the more than 3 billion people living in the countryside worldwide, 1.5 billion laboured as farmers on less than five acres of land, and the majority of people living in extreme poverty were agricultural labourers, small farmers and fishermen. The progressive deterioration of farm income and its effect on rural economies had fuelled massive migration towards cities, with all the attendant problems. Accordingly, farmer's organizations had called for the celebration of the International Year of Family Farming in order to promote prosperous and sustainable family agricultural development in rural and fishing areas on all continents, especially in developing countries. The declaration of the International Year would help in finding ways and means to deal with the ongoing challenges to family farming.

Agenda item 26: Towards global partnerships (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.43)

Draft resolution entitled "Towards global partnerships" (A/C.2/66/L.43)

29. **Mr. Herczynski** (Poland), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.43, said that Monaco had become a sponsor. In order to overcome the many global challenges that were faced and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it was essential for the United Nations to work in partnership with all relevant stakeholders, including Governments, the private sector and civil society. The United Nations was a unique partner for the global business community in the promotion of sustainable development and in poverty eradication, and it must continue to encourage private sector actors not already doing so to support the development agenda. The Global Compact and the many partnerships involving United Nations agencies, funds and programmes continued to play an important role in promoting dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations and the private sector with a view to furthering the shared goals.

Agenda item 29: People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.40)

Draft resolution on people's empowerment and development (A/C.2/66/L.40)

30. **Ms. Melon** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.40 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Agenda item 61: Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (*continued*) (A/C.2/66/L.22)

Draft resolution on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (A/C.2/66/L.22)

31. **Mr. Khalil** (Egypt), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.22, said that Azerbaijan, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Guinea-Bissau, Malaysia, Namibia, Turkey and Viet Nam had joined the list of sponsors. The draft resolution reflected the findings in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/66/78-E/2011/13 that the Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, continued to deepen the economic and social hardships of the Palestinian people and was associated with illegal exploitation of their natural resources.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.